

TREASURE

OUR

delaware

COASTS

and

ESTUARIES



DELAWARE'S COASTAL ZONE IS OF MAJOR IMPORTANCE TO ITS ECONOMY. THE STATE'S BEACHES, BARRIER ISLANDS, AND INLAND BAYS ARE VITAL TO ITS TOURISM, AGRICULTURE, MARINE COMMERCE, AND CHEMICAL MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES. BIRD WATCHERS ALONE BRING SIGNIFICANT TOURISM DOLLARS TO DELAWARE WHEN THEY COME TO WITNESS THE CLOUDS OF MIGRATORY BIRDS THAT MAKE THEIR STOP-OVER ALONG THE SHORES OF DELAWARE BAY. THE COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT (CZMA) PROVIDES THE FRAMEWORK NECESSARY TO SUSTAIN THE ECONOMIC AND ECOLOGICAL VALUE OF THESE COASTAL AREAS. THIS LAW, WHICH IS ADMINISTERED BY THE NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION (NOAA), RECOGNIZES A NATIONAL INTEREST IN OUR COASTAL AND OCEAN AREAS. IT ALLOWS STATES AND TERRITORIES, NOT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT, TO DETERMINE HOW BEST TO BALANCE CONSERVATION OF THE COASTAL ENVIRONMENT WITH HUMAN USES THAT DEPEND ON COASTAL RESOURCES.

THE CZMA IN DELAWARE

The CZMA establishes two programs to balance the use and protection of America's coasts. The Coastal Management Program gives states a flexible framework to address a broad range of community development, economic, and natural resource issues at the state and local level. The National Estuarine Research Reserve System protects key coastal areas for long-term scientific study, education, and resource stewardship.

Delaware Coastal Management Program

Approved: 1979

Lead Agency: Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

Delaware's Coastal Program, through the Division of Soil and Water Conservation, works to protect the state's coastal waters and resources, including its beaches and navigable waterways. The program works with landowners and state and local agencies to promote urban and agricultural practices that reduce the flow of pollution into Delaware's waters. The coastal program is also involved in implementing a special area management plan for the Pea Patch Island Heronry Region and the Northern Delaware Wetlands Rehabilitation Program. The goal is to maintain important areas for shoreline bird nesting and migration.

miles of coastline
381

coastal population in 2000
783,600

fy03 czma core (section 306)
funding
\$1,501,000

fy03 czma enhancements
(section 309) funding
\$101,000

fy03 coastal nonpoint
implementation
\$242,000

fy03 national estuarine research
reserve operations, education,
monitoring and stewardship
\$448,000

fy03 national estuarine research
reserve land acquisition and
construction
\$817,500



Accomplishments of Delaware's coastal program include:

- *providing funding and technical assistance to local governments to improve the consideration of coastal resources in local ordinances and comprehensive land use plans.*
- *implementing a special area management plan for the Pea Patch Island Heronry—the largest on the eastern shore north of Florida—in the heavily trafficked Delaware River. The plan provides funding, both direct and leveraged, to local and state entities for such efforts as restoring heron nesting habitat, reducing the impact of potential oil spills by installing anchor points for oil booms, and incorporating buffer zones into comprehensive plans.*
- *undertaking an effort to develop environmental indicators to measure, monitor, and report on the health of the coastal area.*

Delaware's National Estuarine Research Reserve

Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve

Designated: 1993

Lead Agency: Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control

The Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve is one of a national network of coastal protected areas that conduct science, education, and stewardship. The reserve system is a partnership between NOAA and the states. The Delaware Reserve consists of two components: Blackbird Creek, which is primarily freshwater; and the St. Jones River, which is dominated by saltmarshes and open waters of the Delaware Bay. Surrounded by farmlands, meadows, and growing development, the reserve is able to examine the contribution and control of runoff pollution into marsh and bay ecosystems.

RESEARCH: The reserve monitors long-term changes in weather and aquatic conditions in the estuary. The reserve's research and monitoring programs address key management issues, such as biodiversity and the impacts of land use on estuarine habitats, ecological impacts on horseshoe crab populations from migratory shorebirds, beach replenishment activities in relation to habitat preservation/reclamation, and eutrophication and contaminants in the estuary.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH: The reserve offers a wide variety of educational programs for the general public, school groups, private and nonprofit organizations, educators, and coastal decisionmakers. Coastal decisionmaker workshops have included such topics as land use planning and smart growth, energy resource conservation and development for the next decade, and acoustical bay bottom mapping.

PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION

The Delaware Environmental Observing System is a real-time environmental observing project initiated by the University of Delaware and the Delaware Emergency Management Agency. The purpose of the project is to develop a network of real-time observation stations throughout the state to aid in emergency planning and response along with basic environmental information and research needs. This project will network all existing compatible stations in the state and add existing stations to areas where additional monitoring is necessary. The stations will be linked to a single website for near real-time cooperators in this project include: Delaware National Estuarine Research Reserve, University of Delaware, Department of Geography, Delaware Emergency Management Agency, Delaware Geological Survey, Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control, Delaware Solid Waste Authority, Delaware Department of Transportation, National Weather Service, and Federal Emergency Management Agency.